Center of Conspiracy Trial Popular, Successful Man

Clay Shaw, the man accused of conspiring with others to kill President John F. Kennedy, had been known to most people until his arrest as the retired managing director of the International Trade Mart.

But Clay Shaw is a man who has managed to combine his professional career with broad outside interests.

He probably is the most successful individual restorer of French Quarter property. He is a playwright of moderate success. He loves theater, good food and fine music. He is an avid reader, a world traveler and fluent in several languages. And he is popular in a large circle of friends.

BORN IN Kentwood, Shaw moved with his family to New Orleans when he was five. His grandfather at one time was sheriff of Tangipahoa Parish.

His mother, Mrs. Alice Shaw, lives in Hammond, where Shaw spends much of his time since the death of his father over two years ago.

During World War II, Shaw served as aide-de-camp to Brig. Gen. C. O. Thrasher, and during the battle of France was Thrasher's deputy chief of staff. He was named a Chevalier of the Order of the Crown of Belgium and the French government bestowed on him the "Chevalier de l'Ordre du Merite Commercial."

DISCHARGED IN 1946 with the rank of major, Shaw spent a brief period in New York City, where he was engaged in producing plays. Then he returned to New Orleans to join ITM, serving for 18 years until his retirement in 1965. During that period he became the close friend of mayors, politicians, businessmen, socialites and artists.

After his retirement he traveled to Europe where he received permission from the widow of a Spanish playwright to translate one of his plays. The manuscript was turned over to his literary agent in New York.

At the time of his arrest nearly two years ago, he was working on a play.